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SUBJECT Tankers of the Petroleum Shipping Companies in
The Volga-Caspian Region

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2. The Caspian tanker steamship agencies have always been capable of transporting more petroleum products than the Ministry of the Petroleum Industry could produce. There were about twenty-two 5,000-ton barges added to the fleets of Regdtanker from 1948 to 1951. There were also some new tugs added at this time with an aggregate towing capacity of 6,000 hp.
3. Some of the pre-revolution tankers still in operation are: BakSovet, Arrarat, Marat, Kraanovodak, Sovetskiy Ukraina, Sovetskaya Gursiya, Edison, Asiya, Kirov, Darwin, Nakhichivan, Soyus Vodnikov and Katayana. These tankers range in size from 1500 to 2500 tons and are all steam driven.
4. All of the ships of the tanker fleets are either steam or Diesel driven with no Diesel-electric main propulsion plants in existence. There has been no tanker construction in the Soviet Union subsequent to 1935.
5. The Russian words commonly used for a petroleum tank of a tanker are otseka or tank. The word used by the Soviets for globe valve is klinket, and they express the transport capacity of a fleet by means of provoznaya sposobnost' flota.
6. Baku has petroleum loading docks numbered from 31 to 60. The docks numbered from 1 to 30 are used for shipment of dry goods by the Caspian Dry Cargo Steamship Agency (KaspFlot). The petroleum docks are located south of Baku along the Apsheronkiy Peninsula. The loading is performed by the shore installations at Baku.
7. I do not believe that it would be possible to move a seagoing tanker from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea via the Volga-Don Canal or vice versa. The maximum depth of the Volga-Don Canal was to be eight to nine feet. This depth limitation

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combined with the sharp turns necessary at places such as the Sergeyevskiy Narrows in the Volga Delta would make it impossible for a large tanker to negotiate the voyage. Even if the tanker were empty it would be impossible due to the sharp turns in the narrows which must be considered the controlling factor in such an undertaking.

8. In general the barges of the Volga River Petroleum Steamship Agency (Volgatanker) are better than those of Reydtanker because the former has newer barges and a few technical improvements.
9. There is no adequate fresh water supply in Krasnovodsk so that two tankers of Reydtanker are used to transport fresh water to that port. The Yakob Sverdlov and the Rosa Luksemburg are used for that purpose. It was once proposed that the tankers Darwin and Aziya be converted to this work, but the change never took place to my knowledge.
10. There have been no changes in the regulations for cleaning the holds of barges and tankers. The tankers are filled with hot water to clear away any residue which the pumps could not drain from the tanks. Steam is then used to further remove residue from the sides of the tanks and groups of women are then sent down into the holds to clean the tanks with rags. There has been no effort to mechanize this process.
11. The tanks of ships handling gasoline are supposed to be hermetically sealed and vents are erected above the decks of the tankers and barges through which fumes from the tanks are released. In spite of these precautions the tanker Taymazy exploded in 1950. Further precautions require the use of rubber gloves and personnel were warned against breathing the fumes, but nevertheless the tanker crews in the Caspian region chronically suffered from burns caused by the fumes and consequently were under a constant mental strain.

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